

Nantucket Basket Record 'Smashed' At Osona's



Rafael Osona with the "record smashing" Nantucket basket that sold for \$115,000.

NANTUCKET, MASS. — A possibly unique Nantucket basket established a "record smashing" price paid at auction for an individual example at Rafael Osona's on Saturday, August 6. The \$1.5 million sale was a "real treat," according to Osona, with "lots of bidders and high numbers all day long."

A full house was on hand for the auction and at times as many as seven phone bidders participated. "It was incredible," stated the auctioneer. "There was the same frenzy and electricity in the air all day long."

The highlight of the auction was the Nantucket basket and it captured the attention of Americana collectors across the country, as well as dealers, collectors and a large contingent of

islanders. Many in attendance at the Nantucket Historical Association's antiques show, conducted the same weekend, also took the opportunity to preview the Osona sale and nearly everyone that got a chance to view, much less handle, the rare basket fell in love with it.

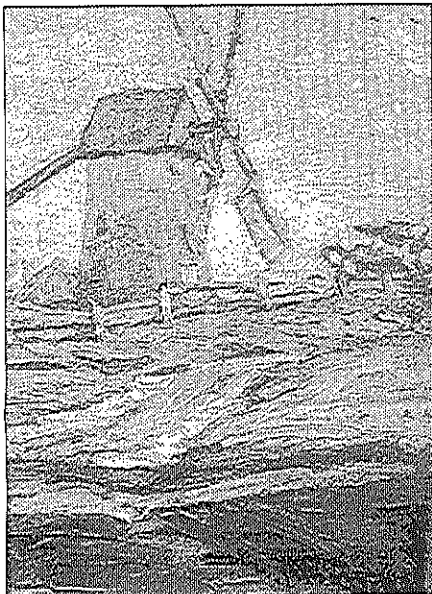
With a robust round low form, the handleless basket was constructed with staves extending above the rim that had been individually carved into exquisite hearts. "There is one other similar example that I know of," commented Osona, "which I arranged to get on loan for an exhibit at the Nantucket Lightship Basket Museum three years ago. That one is smaller and had lollipops on the end of the staves. This is the only one that I have ever heard of with

continuing to hammer away at each other. At \$50,000, with no sign of slowing down, Osona asked for \$60,000 and was immediately rewarded with an advancement.

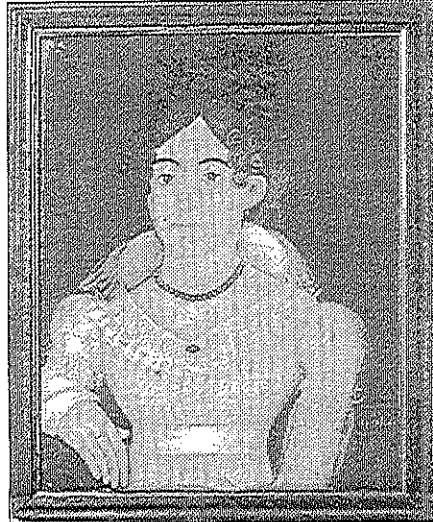
"I was surprised," commented Osona after the auction. "I expected to get a lot of money for it, but not that much money." The two bidders were both determined to own the lot until Pratt, asked by Osona for an advancement to \$110,000, refused with the lot selling to the telephone bidder for \$100,000, plus premium, resulting in a record price for a single Nantucket basket of \$115,000.

While the form of the basket was intriguing, the story behind it was equally juicy. "It came from a Nantucket family and has probably never been off the

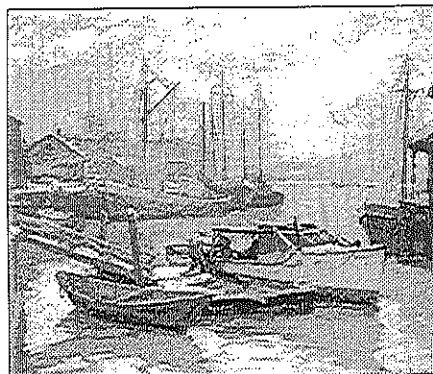
Nantucket Basket Wins Over 'Hearts' Of Collectors At Osona's



"Nantucket's Old Mill" by Anne Ramsdell Congdon did well, selling at \$12,075.



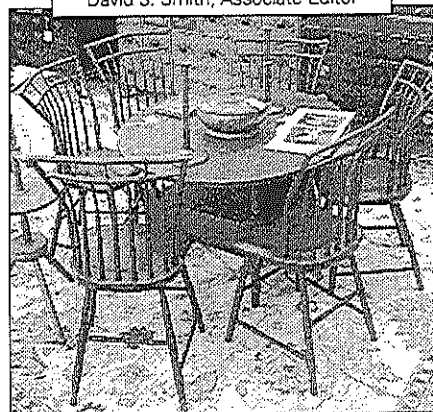
A folksy pastel of a lady also did well, selling at \$40,250.



The Emile Gruppe painting, "The Italian Docks, Gloucester," sold for \$18,400.



The cupboard in green paint realized \$3,450, the windmill weight sold at \$1,035.



The assembled set of six Windsors sold for \$2,875, the chair/table in old red brought \$3,565.

Auction Action In Nantucket, Mass.

the hearts," he said.

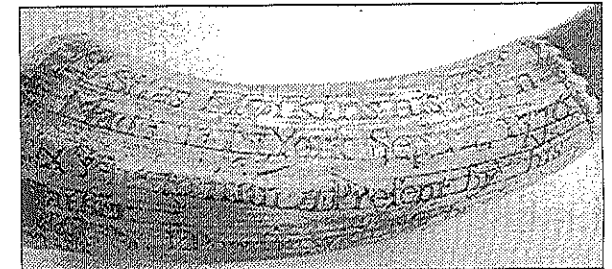
Nantucket basket aficionado Wayne Pratt was rumored to have stopped by Osona's almost daily to inspect the rare basket. The Woodbury, Conn., and Nantucket Americana dealer confirmed that he had "handled" the basket and he remarked that it was the "best Nantucket basket that has ever been seen on the market. There was nothing you could fault," said Pratt. "The color was fabulous and of the three known this is by far the best one."

As the rare piece crossed the auction block Osona opened the lot for bidding at \$7,000. With seven clients poised on the telephone and more in the gallery, the bids came fast and furious. Moving in \$1,000 increments, the lot moved quickly to \$20,000 where Osona upped the ante to \$25,000 advances. At \$25,000, competition had narrowed to two bidders, Wayne Pratt and a collector on the telephone believed to be from New York. At \$30,000, Osona once again raised the jumps to \$5,000 with the two bidders

island," stated Osona. "They have had it since around 1915 and it wouldn't surprise me if they bought it from the maker on Orange Street." While not sure of exactly who might of made the basket, Osona loosely attributed it to Ferdinand Sylvario.

Another lot with interesting provenance also established a hefty price as a Ralph Cahoon oil on Masonite titled "Still Life Therom" was sold. The painting depicted a scrimshawed oval pantry box overflowing with fruit, with its lid and a scrimshawed tooth in the foreground. The box was decorated with ship and sailor, the with mermaid decoration and the tooth with flags and a sailing vessel.

Osona related that Jackie Kennedy had seen the painting at Ralph Cahoon's studio in an unfinished state in the early 1950s, just about the time she had started a collection for her husband of scrimshaw. "When she returned the painting was gone," stated Osona, "and she asked Ralph to please try and



The Silas Hoskins powder horn dated 1776 sold for \$13,800.



Bidding on the Ralph Cahoon was also brisk with it selling for \$74,750.

Review and Photos by
Antiques and The Arts Weekly
David S. Smith, Associate Editor

get the people that had purchased it to sell it to her. Ralph asked and the people said they had grown fond of it and wouldn't sell it," he said. It has remained in the same family ever since, according to the auctioneer.

Bidding on the Cahoon was also brisk with it finally selling for \$74,750. The record price for a Cahoon was established in 1999 when Osona sold one titled "Nantucket Calm Bake" for \$189,000.

A folksy pastel of a lady also did well, selling at \$40,250. It had been part of a collection assembled in the 1970s by Bernice and Howard Feldman, half of which had been inherited by Barbara Stevens for whom Osona was selling many pieces.

Another painting with Feldman collection provenance that did well was a painting of a young Creole girl with a poodle that was done in a folk art style. This lot also hammered down at \$40,250.

A painting that had recently

been sold at another New England auction house by Nantucket artist George Herbert McCord brought substantially more when sold on island. The painting, titled "Old Wharf, Nantucket," was a luminous scene with weathered fish processing buildings along side a wharf. Bidding on the lot was also active with it selling at \$29,900.

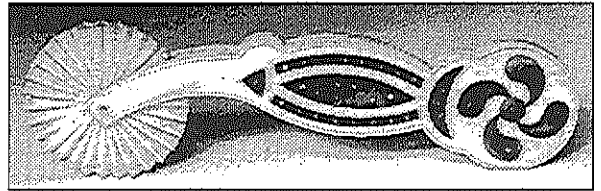
Scrimshawed items saw mixed results with one lot bringing a somewhat "disappointing price," according to Osona. The lot was an extremely rare double seahorse carved whale's tooth walking stick with ebony bands. "There was a time when this could have brought a lot more money," commented the auctioneer, but it still did well selling at \$23,000.

A whale ivory pie crimper with tortoise shell inlay was sold just before the Nantucket basket was offered and it realized \$20,700, as did the lot just after the basket, a scrimshawed tooth with spread-winged eagle

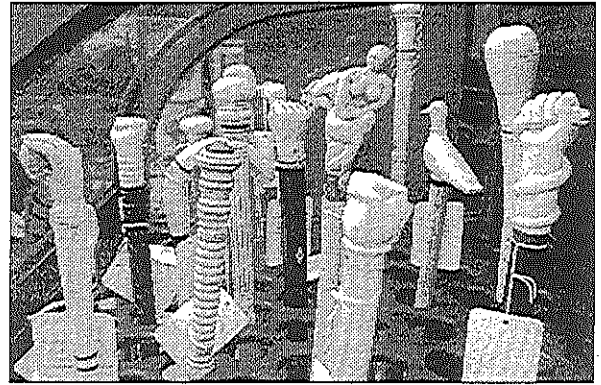
on one side and a sailing three-masted ship on the reverse. A tooth scrimshawed with a whaling ship and two long boats engaged in battle with a whale brought \$20,700, while a tooth decorated with two sailing ships sold for \$12,650.

A primitive painting of a seated child with rattle that had been withdrawn from the auction found its way back into the sale at the last moment. "The consignor asked us to withdraw it because of sentimental feelings they had for the painting, but they hadn't picked it up and people that flew in to inspect other items got to see it after all. The morning of the sale they called and told us to sell it. Luckily we had everyone lined up by auction time," said Osona, and it went out at a healthy \$31,625.

Prices include the 15 percent buyer's premium charged. For further information contact Rafael Osona, POB 2607, Nantucket MA 02584, 508-228-3942 or www.nantucketauctions.com.

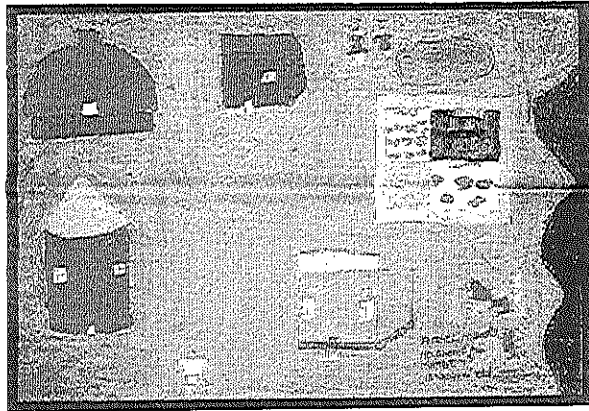


A whale ivory pie crimper with tortoise shell inlay realized \$20,700.



Whale ivory canes sold between \$920 and \$23,000.

Children's Art From Zululand At Hemingway African Gallery



NEW YORK CITY — Brian Gaisford of Hemingway African Gallery at The Manhattan Art & Antiques Center is currently presenting an art exhibition of works by young grade school students from Zululand, South Africa, on display and for sale through October. Proceeds from the sale of these works will be donated toward the purchase of art supplies for 1,000 students of Ncepheni Combined Primary School in Kwazulu, South Africa.

Gaisford first discovered the school on one of his cultural and wildlife photographic safaris three years ago. While leading tours to the historic Isandlwana Battlefield, where in 1879 a Zulu army battalion defeated its British colonizers, Gaisford was attracted to the colorful artwork painted in the school nearby situated on the battlefield. When he

learned that the children were painting on the walls with sticks covered with paper because the school had no money for art supplies, he made a commitment to secure funds to buy paper, crayons and paint brushes.

The exhibition focuses on scenes that are common sites throughout the village. The children who range in age from 8 through 16 draw with a warmth and color reflected throughout the region.

Hemingway African Gallery will organize a trip for donors to the Zulu school in October.

Hemingway African Gallery, #96 and #97, is in The Manhattan Art & Antiques Center, 1050 Second Avenue (between 55th and 56th Streets).

Exhibition hours are Monday-Saturday 10:30 am to 6 pm, Sunday noon to 6 pm. For information, 212-838-3650 or hemingwaygallery.com.

Nohra Haime To Host Silvio Merlino Exhibit

NEW YORK CITY — Silvio Merlino's trenchant vision of the world will be on view at the Nohra Haime Gallery, September 6-October 1. The ten paintings in the exhibition, "Silvio Merlino — Major Works: 1980s-1990s" incorporate mixed media and collage with striking paint and present a saturated and incisive tableau.

Sometimes whimsical at oth-

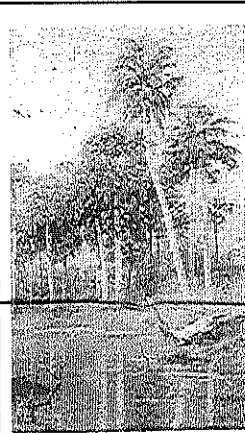
ers apocalyptic, Merlino explores technological advancement, warfare and mass production within the cadre of beauty and nature. His work is poised between poetic metaphor and satirical insight into our world.

The gallery is at 41 East 57th Street. Gallery hours are 10 am to 6 pm, Tuesday-Friday. For information, 212-888-3550.

FLORIDA PAINTINGS WANTED

Do you know where there are paintings by the following artists? We are actively purchasing paintings of Florida by artists such as Herman Herzog, Martin Johnson Heade, George Inness, Thomas Moran, Ernest Lawson, Winslow Homer, John Singer Sargent, Anthony Thieme, Frank Shapleigh, William Aiken Walker, Emile A. Gruppe, Beanie Backus, Emmett Fritz, Harold Newton, Al Hair and more.

Please call : Michael A. Latragna Fine Art
1275 Clover Street
Rochester, New York , 14010
1-800-442-0725
email: artman@netart.net
all inquiries will be held confidential



Visit us on the web at AntiquesandTheArts.com

THE SANDWICH GLASS MUSEUM'S EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL CAPE COD GLASS SHOW & SALE

SEPTEMBER 17 and 18, 2005

Saturday 10-5
Sunday 11-4



Cape Cod
- Community College

Exit 6 off Route 6 / Mid-Cape Hwy. 1/4 mile North, West Barnstable, MA

Forty-Five Nationally Prominent Glass Dealers

OFFERING

Antique & Collectible American & European Glassware
From The 18th to 20th Centuries

REFERENCE BOOKS ON GLASS / FREE GLASS IDENTIFICATION
FREE PARKING / FOOD & BEVERAGES AVAILABLE

Admission \$6.50 (\$5.50 with this ad)

All ticket proceeds support The Sandwich Glass Museum

CALL 508.888.0251 FOR INFORMATION

www.sandwichglassmuseum.org • SGM@CapeCod.net

CODE 501